INTERNATIONAL ART SHOW TO BE HELD IN NEW YORK

"FETE DIEU DECORATIONS," BY H. C. MERRILL.

Novel Features Planned by American Painters and Sculptors for Next February—New York Water Color and Other Exhibitions

WITHOUT any blare of trumpets Arthur B. Davies, president of the American Painters and Sculptors, slipped off to Europe a little over a fortnight ago in the interest of the large international exhibition of contemporary art to be held February 15 to March 15 in the Sixty-ninth Regiment Armory, at Twenty-sixth street and Lexington avenue. Mr. Davies went to join the secretary of the new organization, Walt Kuhn, who has been visiting French, German and English cities for some time past to obtain examples of painting, sculpture and work in other media for the first big international show in New York's art annals.

By the end of November, when both men will return, plans will be perfected for the American division of the exhibition, and it is expected by those who have the work in charge that an assemblage of pictures, sculpture, drawings, wood carvings, pottery and other forms of art expression will be gathered together which will present much that is new and a good deal that is vital in a way to reach and interest the public.

The scope of the new society's display has widened considerably since the organization of the movement not quite a year ago. The story of how the American Painters and Sculptors came to be formed has not been told until now, and it is worth reciting. The idea was suggested in the course of a little talk at the studio of Jerome Myers, the painter, the other artists present being Henry Fitch Taylor, who besides devoting time to landscape was manager of the now discontinued Madison Gallery for American Art; Elmer MacRae and Walt Kuhn.

From the beginning it was recognized that should the proposed membership of the society be limited to men whose views as to style and method were reasonably similar it would at once be in danger of a certain smallness of ideals and of shutting out thought and effort that might be of real meaning and importance. So in the initial group invited to become members there were diverse spirits, men not altogether congenial to all of their confreres, yet evidently not to be omitted from a movement that should include as much as possible of what was earnest and advancing in American art.

The effort to combine within the small group elements deliberately chosen for their divergent qualities brought about, as will be remembered, the hasty retreat of the man who had been chosen president of the first general meting, J. Alden Weir, who vehemently disclaimed any desire to be a part of such a body as had been briefly indicated in a letter from its vice-president, Gutzon Borglum, printed in the newspapers. This left the post of honor and difficulty open, and in due time the American Painters and Sculptors showed its calibre by electing the painter who of all Americans of the past twenty years has had perhaps the surest fund of high imagination and creative energy, accompanied by a lofty technical ability, on which to draw, in realizing on the canvas his sometimes naïve, sometimes cryptic, always sincere and often strangely beautiful themes.

Mr. Davies has been president in more than name. He has given up most of his time the past summer to the task of shaping the big project, daringly ambitious, which is to be fulfilled next February. With the help of the other directors and officers and the ready cooperation of nearly every man of the little society, which has less than twenty-five members all told, he has secured the armory—the rent for a month is over $5,000—raised money in considerable quantities from art lovers in this city toward the very heavy expense of bringing together work from all over this country as well as from Europe with the accompanying burdens of transportation and insurance charges, and laid out a floor plan for the entire area of the glass roofed building at Twenty-sixth street, which will give no less than 24,000 running feet of wall space on the line.

Besides all this Mr. Davies and his colleagues have looked over the field here and abroad and they are now notifying artists to send back word what they have that would be suitable to exhibit. Portrait painters often turn off, under the pressure of genuine desire, something quite apart from their usual work, some study, some bit of water-color perhaps, which they cherish for its distinct expression of their mood of the moment, but which in the nature of things would not be likely to be selected for regular and established exhibitions of New York's art season. Sculptors may have made some notes in an unaccustomed medium, perhaps in carved wood, because of the obvious appropriateness of the material for the theme. A mural decorator may have experimented in textiles of a lithographer may have taken a chance shot, and a lucky one, in pottery. This is within the scope of this new society's show, and it is the purpose of the present canvassing of artists to bring out information that will reveal such work. Even needlework is not to be excluded; any art expression whatever will be eligible, so it be eloquent enough in its own kind.

From abroad it is expected to obtain work of signal importance, much of it not familiar in manner to the American public. Representative pictures by Cezanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh have not yet been seen here, but these apostles of post-impressionism and some of their colleagues may be displayed at the armory in sensational groups. Maillol, one of the latest developments in French sculpture, will probably be seen in certain of his massively proportioned nudes, while Rodin now long since passed by in the race for new forms of utterance, will also be represented. Degas, Monet, Renoir and Redon are also likely to be put forth among the Frenchmen.

From England, among others, will come works of Stevens, Augustus John and George Clausen, while in Ireland, whose art is virtually unknown in this country, it is hoped to get specimens of what Nathaniel Hone, George Russell and Jack Yeats have done. As one of the brief circulars sent out by the American Painters and Sculptors puts it, "the aim will be to choose from all created beauty of this epoch that which best reveals the individual or group among creative workers or the contribution of a race. The organizing of such exhibitions, the revelation to this great productive community of that which makes the wealth of nations in the highest sense, must appeal alike to love of art and love of country."

Returning to details, the floor of the armory will be so arranged with partitions running up to a convenient height that nearly thirty separate rooms of varying sizes and all equally well lighted by the glass roof will be available. Should the proposed arrangement be carried out, and it is the result of rareful study, with the aid of architectural skill, there will be a gallery about 100x50 feet for drawings as one enters at the central door of the building. Two other rooms for drawings will also be provided, each about 50x10 feet.

There will be a central gallery for sculpture, 50 feet square, with rooms about 100 by 25 opening from either of two opposite sides, also for sculpture. Three galleries 50 feet square and two about 50 by 40 will be among the accommodations for paintings, and there will, as already indicated, be perhaps twenty smaller rooms, in which can be shown to advantage works of allied character or style, whether pictures or anything else. Classicists, Romanticists (to quote further from the advance circular), Impressionists, post-Impressionists, Cubists, Futurists, all will find their own places in the assemblage, and it is hoped to avoid clashes of one kind of art with another.

A complete system of electric lights will be installed, so that the galleries will be attractive in the evenings as well as by day. The mere matter of gathering and placing the vast mass of material expected for the show in the way of pictures, sculpture and the like will be one for a first rate organization to handle. It is probable that a loft may have to be taken near the armory for the temporary storage of works to be exhibited, in order that no undue delay may be met in placing and hanging the exhibition, after the costly armory rent begins.

The selection of the American work, except that of members, will be done mainly by invitation, and it is hoped by those having the task in hand that all artists interested, whether they are themselves to be represented or not, will put the committee or officers of the society in touch with what they believe to be of significance in the studios of other artists.

To bring information regarding this new and interesting organization up to the minute it may be worth while to print here a list of its members. The president of the American Painters and Sculptors, as already told, is Arthur B. Davies, the vice-president Gutzon Borglum, the secretary Walt Kuhn, and the treasurer Elmer MacRae. The directors, besides the officers, are J. Mowbray Clarke, Jerome Myers and Henry Fitch Taylor. The other members include Karl Anderson, George Bellows, Leon Dabo, Jo Davidson, Guy du Bois, Putnam Brinley, D. Nankivell, Robert Henri, Jonas Lie, Ernest Lawson, William Glackens, Bruce Porter of San Francisco, John Sloan, Edward Kramer, Maurice Prendergast and Allen Tucker.

PALERMO, SICILY, BY H. VANCE SWOPE.

FICTITIOUS PORTRAIT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Time was when the New York Water Color Club was a secessionist movement, a breaking away from the conventional policy and methods of the American Water Color Society, which was mature in years before the newer club was formed, now a matter of twenty-three seasons ago. But the sound of the drums and fifes of rebellion is hushed; the forward movement has ceased; comfortable repose reigns. In fact the present exhibition at the Fine Arts Building, to remain open through November 24, recalls a literary club of this city, one of whose members, not pleased with the conduct of affairs, was asked whether he found the proceedings dull. "Dull?" he exclaimed. "Dull?" Why, my dear sir, the Lord will not forgive such dulness!"

There are 406 exhibits spread through two galleries. Nearly 200 painters are represented. Many of them are members of the club and there is a generous number of women contributors. In several instances little centres or groups of one artist's work have been formed with cheering results. Such are the cases afforded by the portrait drawings of Clara Weaver Parrish, the outdoor subjects by Jane Peterson, the dashing street scenes by David B. Milne, which have vigor and piquancy; the Central Park pictures by Maud Hunt Squire, and the "Glimpse of the Hudson" and "Evening" of M. Peterson. Enough alike in theme and manner to be taken as a pair are two little pictures by Stuart Davis and Henry J. Glintenkamp respectively, each showing a rather sordid young man and woman, with a background of street. In each there is something of what the painters call quality, though neither is of importance.

A group that ought to be better than it is is that supplied by William Prettyman of subjects found at Panama in the region of the canal. Perhaps it is not fair to look at them, with the striking lithographs of Mr. Pennell still fresh in the eye and mind, since these were exhibited in New York only five weeks ago. But the truth is that these water colors, except for one of the dozen, "The Beach, Tobago Island," are tame and tepid in color and design. The canal, in its present stage, is a theme for broad, vigorous treatment. One guesses what Winslow Homer would have made of it in water color—and was it not at a show of this very organization a decade ago that the place of honor in the centre of the Vanderbilt gallery wall was occupied by a group of Homer's water colors, whose effect, in their strong, full resonance of hue was likened by a sympathetic artist to the playing of a fine brass band?

But let the visitor pass on, round the present show, to gain what comfort he may from some of the more individual paintings. Near the entrance, at the left one might as well walk with the tide of catalogue numbers as against it is a mountain and river scene by Clarence K. Chatterton which might be at Newburgh. It is slight, but bears a second and third inspection, for its colors are harmonious and its note is neither forced nor hesitating, but agreeably natural.

Sergeant Kendall has a "Portrait of Miss M. D. H.," which has the accuracy and the bleak hardness that mark much of what he has been doing for a good while past. There are other examples here of his familiar handiwork. Clara Weaver Parrish may be named again for the nude in the underbrush which she shows under the title of "Crepuscule." Sydney Dale Shaw's "Barber Shop" is to be noted in passing, and there is color in Mary Wilson Hubbard's "The Poppy Garden."

By H. Vance Swope is one of the best things in the show, "Palermo, Sicily," with moving water and a small sailboat that seems to belong in the composition and to dominate it without being itself unduly magnified. It is judicious in scale and the color has vibrancy.

Minatures in large cases form a gateway into the inner gallery. There is a "Chalk Cliff, Coast of Devon," by Florence Francis Snell, which reflects personal observation and a perceptible pleasure on the artist's part in the rendering. Close at home is a colorful glimpse of downtown New York, "Cortlandt Street," by Galen J. Perrett, a subject worth study. Another picture by Mr. Chatterton is here, "The Country Circus," in which one sees again some well managed gradations of light, color and a pleasing arrangement of composition. From the brush of Ethel Mars has come the little "Circus Parade," while for warm color one may look with pleasure at the seashore subject of I. Wells Stroud. Cheerful throughout is the street scene, with its wreaths overhanging the way to a church, "Fete Dieu Decorations." The author is H. C. Merrill, and it is no secret that the hanging committee would have been glad of more of the same sort to use in other wall centres requiring a little brightening.

The New York Water Color Club show is open on weekdays from 10 to 5, and on Sundays from 1:30 to 5.

Francesco Bartolozzi, like George Frederick Handel, was a continental European who went to England in the prime of his life and exerted a positive influence upon English art, as Handel did upon English music; each became, in fact, what is now felt to be typically English in his mode of expression, despite his foreign birth and training. Bartolozzi made original drawings, but by far his most important task was the engraving of countless paintings, landscapes as well as portraits, after the most famous and popular English eighteenth century masters. To be engraved by Bartolozzi was a fortunate fate for any picture, since the careful Italian, with his deft and kindly touch and his singularly clear perception of what was characteristic, was an interpreter in the best sense. King George III. made him engraver to his Majesty and paid him, so it is recorded, the sum of £300 a year. The Royal Academy made him a member, and this helped to keep him in the foreground, this and his easy adaptation of himself to British ways.

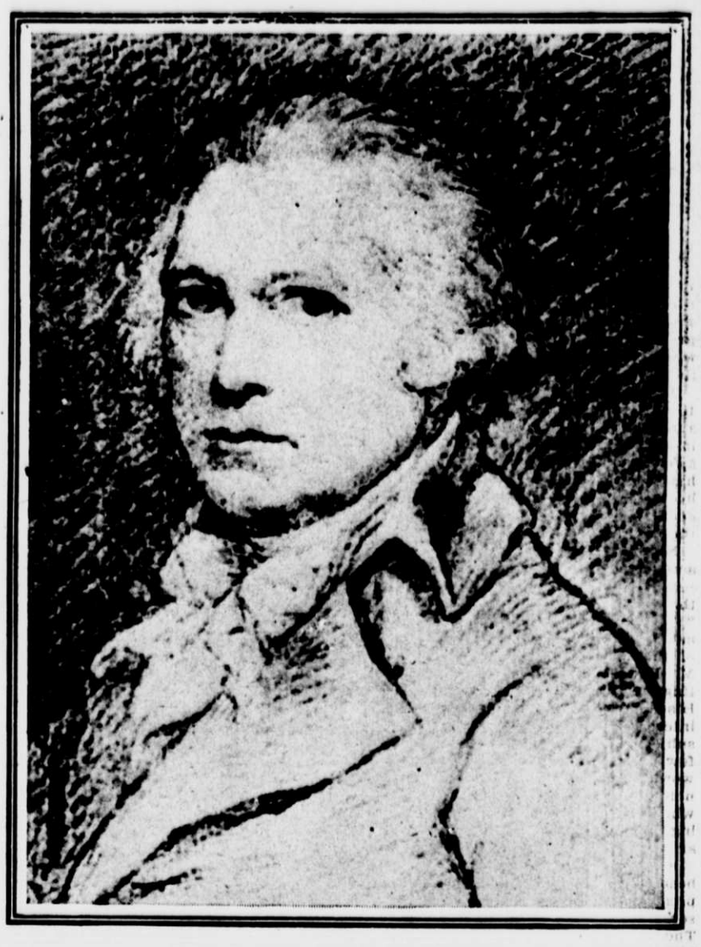
Bartolozzi was not quite 40 when he came to England in 1764. His birthplace was Florence, where his father had been a goldsmith, and his master in the art of engraving was Joseph Wagner of Venice. He lived in England nearly forty years, and in 1802 he became director of the National Academy at Lisbon, retaining the post until his death in 1815, at the age of 90 years.

The occasion for calling up so pleasant and sympathetic a figure from the past is the exhibition, now to be seen at the gallery of E. M. Hodgkins, of a collection of original drawings by Bartolozzi, some of them studies for figures afterward used by the artist, others complete pictures, which he subsequently engraved. Among them are little cherubs and loves, studies of likeable children, a full length study of an athletis model, a man, one of the most important things in the collection; a Venus surrounded by amorini, and an allegorical subject representing Plenty, in the guise of a beautiful woman, supported by two children representing Summer and Winter, the latter bearing a torch.

There is a good deal of sameness about these suave and charming drawings from the Italian's hand, but it was a ripe and pleasing convention that Bartolozzi followed, and the rounded sweetness of his forms does not cloy; to the man himself, at any rate, it was all serious, this amiable and tender decoration. While these drawings show clearly that Bartolozzi was a sensitive and delightful artist, they prove equally that he chose wisely in adopting engraving as his medium, so that he did not have to depend upon his own inventive faculty for his themes or treatment. Yet there is something quite touching in the little picture entitled, "The Daughter of Lavigni Borghis Asleep," and something strangely English, too, in the look of this child who has nodded in her chair.

So large a group of Bartolozzi drawings is not often seen. This collection was brought by Mr. Hodgkins from a descendant of the artist himself, after the drawings had been shown in the Raffaele Canavari museum in Rome. It makes a distinctive and agreeable exhibition.

Portraits of Washington, real and fictitious and of all grades of authenticity between these two extremes, form an interesting loan exhibition in the New York Public Library. Curator Frank Weitenkampf has borrowed them from the noted collection of Charles W. McAlpin, which is the repository of an extraordinary variety and number of these prints. Placed on the walls of the exhibition room on the third floor, the likenesses of the first President make a brave showing. But after the visitor has made the round of the gallery will he feel assured as to what Washington really looked like?



FRANCESCO BARTOLOZZI'S PORTRAIT DRAWING OF HIMSELF.

It was John Neal who said that if Washington were to rise from the grave and not found to resemble the Stuart portrait, by which he meant the Athenæum portrait, he would be rejected as an impostor. So it is really the recorders of a great man's own time, his contemporaries, who establish the tradition regarding him, and when one such representation seems to sum up what succeeding generations would like to accept as their ideal, then this comes to be the standard and deviations from it are looked upon askance.

Authorities upon the subject are now agreed that the familiar and noble Athenæum portrait by which Washington's face is known the world over is considerably idealized. Stuart himself contributed something, perhaps a good deal, to the calm nobility of the countenance when he painted this summary of the virtues and of the great qualities of the founder. In the history of the past other artists and sculptors have no doubt shot as wide of the mark in their pictured likenesses of great folk and in hundreds of instances we have no way of checking up the probable errors of form and feature in their portraiture.

The Historic Records Association, now active and engaged in a novel and important work in the United States, would find in this exhibition of Washington portraits some telling arguments for the aims it has in view, namely the perpetuation in various permanent forms of such data as will enable posterity to enjoy accurate knowledge of how the leaders of to-day looked, what was the sound of their voices and what the fashion of their handwriting. From the variety of interpretations of the aspect of George Washington assembled here it is not easy to determine for one's self what to accept.

Even the Stuart portraits vary; Charles Henry Hart, in his monumental catalogue of Washington portraits, published by the Grolier Club in 1904, has classed them as belonging to five types or divisions, the Vaughan type, the Lansdowne, the Athenæum, the teapot type and the Faneuil Hall class. And there are the authentic likenesses by John Trumbull, who was himself active in the Revolutionary war; by Joseph Wright, by Edward Savage, by Charles Willson Peale and numerous others, all of them embodying some portion of the truth, no doubt. Those by Peale in the McAlpin collection are especially consistent, even though one shows the Commander in Chief wearing Roman armor and apparently about seven feet tall, this preposterous image being recorded on the print as having been ordered by Congress for a monument in Philadelphia.

One impression likely to find its way to the surface in the mind of the average visitor will be of the evidently large contemporary popularity of engravings and etchings of Washington. Not only in America but also in England, France, Holland, Spain and in German speaking countries there were published plates illustrating the great patriot and leader. One finds them here with titles indicating their foreign origin, "El General Washington," for example, with accompanying note of publication in Madrid. It shows rather strikingly the function played even so recently as a century ago by the engraved or etched plate as the sole agent for dissemination on a large scale of a knowledge of the aspect of the persons who figured in the news of the day. Those were the times before the snapshots of facile cameras had reduced the presentation of portraits in print to one of the commonplaces.

The fictitious portraits of Washington are almost as interesting as any others in the McAlpin collection. There are a great number of these, it being customary not only after the first President's death but even during his lifetime to put forth alleged likenesses of him to sell to the unwary. Mr. Hart in his catalogue recalls the portraits copied after one of the well known false likeness, the Campbell picture. One Joseph Reed, sent one of these prints to Washington, who thereupon replied: "Mr. Campbell, whom I never saw to my knowledge, has made a very formidable figure of the Commander in Chief, giving him a sufficient portion of terror in his countenance."

The casual visitor, to whom the name of Peale may be known as that borne by one of the prolific families of American artists in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, will note with surprise that while Charles Wilson Peale is credited with several authentic portraits, the younger Peale, whose Christian name was Rembrandt, is set down as among the makers of fictitious portraits, his work being merely a composite of what had been done by earlier men.